

Influenza-Associated Acute Encephalopathy In Children

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has requested information on influenza-associated acute encephalopathy in children. Since the mid-1990s, several hundreds of cases of acute encephalopathy have been reported in Japanese children with influenza virus infection. These cases have been characterized by fever, rapid onset of encephalopathy, high frequency of neurological sequelae and mortality. Most of the infected children have had laboratory-confirmed evidence of influenza.

To determine if a similar pattern of influenza-associated encephalopathy cases is occurring in the United States, the CDC is requesting information on any case meeting the following criteria.

An individual <18 years old with **ALL** of the following:

1. Altered mental status, or personality change, lasting >24 hours, occurring within five days of the onset of an acute febrile respiratory illness
2. Laboratory rapid diagnostic test evidence of acute influenza virus infection associated with the respiratory illness
3. Diagnosed in the United States

Please report any cases that have occurred after December 31, 1997, to Shawn Richards at the Indiana State Department of Health by calling (317) 233-7740, or by e-mail at srichard@isdh.state.in.us. The information will be provided and forwarded to the CDC to determine if additional investigation is warranted.
